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HILLTOPICS

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volume two, issue twenty-five

week of april 17, 2006

A message to SMU seniors: The time may be short, but it's not over yet...so enjoy it

by Michael Hogenmiller

Counting today's publication date, Monday the seven-teenth of April, I have twelve remaining days of class and thirty-four days left as a college student. "Four years goes quickly," as the saying goes. I hope you'll hear it over and over again from graduating friends, because you too will find yourself sitting down one day with a calendar, counting how many days of college you have left.

It's been a time for acting like a kid while growing up, spending more money than you have, facing some consequences but nothing too serious, falling in love, falling out of love, partying, studying, contemplating your ratio between partying and studying, and thinking about how it is that you look at the world around you. It is four years of growing up incredibly fast and in all sorts of unpredicted directions without even realizing it.

Now that my college years are in their twilight, I can't figure out how I want to spend them. Everyone has stories or prepared responses for that "if you only had thirty days left to live" scenario, but what do you do when you're left with thirty short days of college? Do you just stick to the same routine you've had for the past four years and finish in stride? Is it a sprint to the finish, jam-packed with as many last-minute nights-on-the-town and crazy weekend road trips as your finals schedule will permit?

It's ironic; in the last few weeks it seems like the SMU student body has been revived: by ideas, editorials, maybe even just the warm weather. Students are hanging out at the pool, protesting on the quad, playing Frisbee out in front of Dallas Hall, and I even spotted President Turner taking a stroll around campus. It makes it hard to leave when this place, come spring, wakes up and really begins to feel like college again. There was that lull during the "winter" months, but now you can find students out again at happy hour and study groups meeting for their group projects.

As calendars fill up, term papers stack up, and people plot out their finals schedules, I wonder what this summer and

the next semester will bring for a graduating senior who's still hunting for a job. It's a tricky balance, worrying about the future while being mindful enough about the present to get all of your work turned in—I do need these credits to graduate—and for a guy who's always had a three, six, and nine-month plan, this is new territory.

My best advice, a plan of action for all of the seniors out there, is this: go to every class you have left, no matter how painful. You paid for them (or at least your parents, or someone else's parents, did) and you ought to enjoy some thoughtful stimulation for at least a while longer. Soon, the only intellectual discourse you'll have will come from a loud-mouthed co-worker at Friday happy hour, and even then, it'll only be half-brained and surely skewed to one political direction

or the other.

Also, as a reward for making it to every class, milk up the senioritis when you're off the clock. If you're not in class, go out there and do something. Play outside with friends, go drinking with your buddies, go see a play, movie, musical, art exhibit, or whatever pastime you're into or always wanted to try. Write the papers, study for finals, go to class, but sure as hell don't forget that you're still a college student, because it's borrowed time as May 20 rolls around. Come May 21, you won't have that "I'm a college student" excuse as you feign off your grad-party hangover and attempt to order a coffee at Starbucks. You'll still have the sunglasses and the headache, but responsibility, bills, taxes, and real consequences will loom. Until that moment, make it count with the people who count. They'll be your link to these past four years and the keepers of the stories you made together. Keep a level head, take advantage of every day's possibilities, don't get complacent, and don't bow out yet. There's a ceremony for that, and until then, play hard.

Michael Hogenmiller is a senior political science and music major.



INSIDE this issue

Sport: Kyle Snyder says that even though it isn't the players' fault SMU athletics lack support, it's not totally the fans fault, either. See page 2.

School: *Hilltopics* gets artsy. Two *Hilltopics* editors share their thoughts on current SMU issues in the form of poetry, page 3.

Be Heard: *Hilltopics* is always looking for good submissions on virtually any topic. Email your ideas, feedback, or articles to hilltopics@hotmail.com.

We welcome submissions from all members of the SMU community. Letters to the editor should be up to 300 words in response to a previously published article. Contributions should be articles of up to 300–600 words on any topic or in response to another article. Please email your submission to hilltopics@hotmail.com by Wednesday at 8:00 PM to be included in the following week's publication. Special deadlines will be observed for breaking campus events. The opinions expressed in *Hilltopics* are those of the authors solely and do not reflect the beliefs of *Hilltopics* or any other entity. As such, *Hilltopics* does not publish anonymous articles.

Athletes and student body need to work together to bridge the gap between sports and their fans

by Kyle Snyder

When Dr. Turner announced the hiring of Steve Orsini as SMU's director of athletics, I read the press clippings in eager anticipation of a new era for SMU student athletes. Orsini spoke of continuing the football program's steady climb and resurrecting a men's basketball program desperately in need of new facilities and a fresh burst of confidence. Following Orsini's arrival, the university witnessed the abrupt firing of men's basketball coach Jimmy Tubbs just last week. The athletic department has remained largely silent on the reasons for Tubbs's firing, especially since the NCAA had not yet released the results of an investigation into the program for minor recruiting violations.

While Orsini will bring a fresh vision to our athletic programs, recent problems with fan support can ultimately be traced back to the apathy that exists within the student body and the Dallas community. As a big fan of collegiate football and basketball, I have been an avid supporter of both teams during my time here. Last fall, I spent a Saturday afternoon getting sunburned in College Station as I stood proudly in the A&M student section with my Mustang Maniacs t-shirt on. I even offered my help to

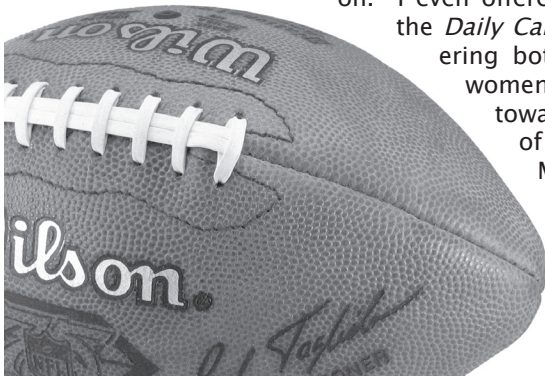
the *Daily Campus* by covering both men's and women's basketball towards the end of the season. My inspiration for this article comes from Kevin Blackistone of the *Dallas Morning*

News, who has a different take on student support of SMU athletics. Blackistone published an editorial back in February that called out the SMU student body directly, arguing that "there may not be a campus in America with a less supportive student fan base than that on the Hilltop. They're an embarrassment."

The lack of student fan support is not a new problem at SMU. Neither football nor men's basketball has established a winning tradition in the last decade, but I have recently taken notice of the chasm that exists between our student-athletes and the rest of the student body. Athletes largely keep to themselves both in the classroom and elsewhere, rarely making time to interact with mainstream students. On the same token, many students pay little attention to athletes during a typical day on campus.

This demographic divide only hinders our ability to promote school spirit at athletic events and weakens the bond within the SMU community. However, the responsibility to change our problem falls on both parties. Athletes must do a better job of promoting themselves and their games to the student body, and students must take a legitimate interest in supporting our athletes who compete for the university at the highest level of collegiate competition. I have had the pleasure of getting to know some of our football players during pickup basketball games over at Dedman, and they are all fine people who I am proud to have representing me when they take the field at Ford Stadium. Rather than calling out the student body simply to attend the next game, I ask my fellow students to get to know some of our athletes so that you have a reason to support them. For our athletes, I ask you to act on opportunities to branch out and get to know your fan base.

Kyle Snyder is a junior finance major.



HILLTOPICS

wants.....YOU!

Hilltopics is currently searching for members of next year's editorial staff. All are invited to apply. Find our application on page 4. Hilltopics editors are intelligent and hard-working, and no journalism, writing, or editorial experience is necessary.

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Hilltopics is a weekly publication, published Mondays. It is sponsored by the University Honors Program.

Are you boring?

(if so, ignore this ad)

We're always looking for interesting submissions.

Send your commentary, proposal, letter, editorial or cartoon to hilltopics@hotmail.com.

All pieces become property of Hilltopics upon submission.

Stirring up pigeons: An ode to George Henson

by Amanda Wall

Here is an ode for the people who stir up the pigeons,
People not satisfied to see flocks just flutter and settle,
But start chain reactions of righteous avian rage.
Editorial after editorial and outright demonstrations!
Fat birds in flight!

We'll settle down in a few days, don't worry.
We'll clutter the quad and coo and strut and
Talk about partisan politics or gay rights on special occasions.

And Ed Board will write their own editorials
And feel lonely.

Aquí es una oda para los que nos enseña hablar,*
To speak up and speak out and speak well.
If only campus could be this angry all the time
And all teachers could make hawks out of doves
By example.

**Here is an ode for those who teach us to speak.*

Amanda Wall is a sophomore English, Spanish, and women's studies major.



Do you have an opinion about...

...politics, music, class, television, football, shopping, intramurals, fraternities, movies, the Mavs, sex, restaurants, religion, sororities, driving, study abroad, fashion, the war, parking, magazines, bars, the weather, professors, the Mustang Band, dating, books, nightclubs, Texas, club sports, or anything else?

we're listening at hilltopics@hotmail.com

What happened to *individual*/style at SMU?

by Yasmin Awad

Except the people at Meadows who don't try to conform,
It seems that everyone at SMU is wearing a uniform.
I wish I could look at an outfit and call it creative.
Not: "Oh wow, that looks expensive. How much did you pay for it?"

In high school, it was worthwhile,
When everyone had his or her own style.
Clothes were an expression,
Not a conformity obsession.
But that's all through,
Here at the prestigious SMU.

Yes there's that kid with the sideburns or the guy with the big hair,
But they're very, very rare.
Where's the rocker? The punk?
The ones with the real funk?
Could they all have gotten too drunk and flunked?
Where are the skaters? The Goths and haters? Where are the nerds and math geeks?
Well, they all shaped up and transformed into SMU preps within weeks.
Where's the ghetto dresser? Cornrows are out of harvest. "Grills" are only a song title by Nelly. And Muslim headcovers are the only du-rags around.

Where's the creativity? The fashion? The art?
No one these days wants to stand apart.
Louis Vuitton, Coach, Chanel, Fendi, North Face, D&B.
Backpacks are becoming a pricey commodity.
Sometimes they're worth more than all that they carry.

Rainbow sandals stand for what they mean.
They're worn through sun, snow, rain, and until they turn green.
Guys wear the same cap so many times,
They should be crimes.
Wouldn't it be fun,
To buy another one?

Sweats are out of the question, for sure,
Unless it's Juicy Couture.
You can't wear a casual t-shirt,
Unless it's advertising a brand name, night club, previous beach party, alcohol, or concert.
Wearing the oversized shirt every week is not enough to show you're part of a sorority, You need the pins, bumper stickers, and bag to ensure your identity.
And you can't buy sunglasses under \$20 bucks. It's a disgrace if they're not \$200 and covering half your face.
A plain shirt is gone,
If it doesn't have a small animal sewn on.
A small horse, moose, or alligator,
Seems to make apparel much greater.
Stop and give everyone's shirt a look-through.
It's like a walk in a zoo.

It's easy to fall into the trap, especially since this stuff is really nice.
But it's a responsibility to be reasonable with the price.

I'm not against spending money on yourself and your appearance,
Even if you never buy anything on clearance.
But does it have to be the same Lacoste shirt? The same Uggs? The same pair of jeans? Guys even wear the same khaki shorts,
Unless they're playing sports.

Remember you are what you wear.
So add a little uniqueness and flair.

Yasmin Awad is a sophomore journalism major.

Hilltopics 2006-2007 Editor Application

Please return by 26 April to hilltopics@hotmail.com or any *Hilltopics* distributor.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Phone Number: _____ Year: _____

Major(s) and Minor(s): _____

Preference of Position: (please rank 1-6, 1 being your first choice; note that actual positions filled may vary from those on application)

_____ **Editor-in-Chief** (conducts weekly meetings of editorial staff, directs overall management of publication)

_____ **Business Manager** (spokesperson for *Hilltopics* to the SMU community, facilitates the logistics of keeping *Hilltopics* in good standing with the University)

_____ **Copy Editor** (responsible for editing articles for length, grammar, and content)

_____ **Distribution Manager** (designs and implements the *Hilltopics* distributions strategy)

_____ **Graphics Editor** (designs each edition of *Hilltopics* and advertisements, as needed; responsible for generating and submitting PDF to printer each week; requires experience with Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign)

_____ **Managing Editor** (directs the content of each issue and, in the case of controversy, has the final say as to what articles are or are not included)

Please note that every editor, regardless of their particular position, will be responsible for distributing Hilltopics each week, and will also write articles as needed.

Application Questions:

Please briefly answer each of the following questions on a separate sheet and submit your responses with your application.

1. Why are you applying to be a *Hilltopics* editor?
2. What do you think are the biggest strengths and biggest weaknesses of *Hilltopics*?
3. What is a political, social, or cultural issue about which you care deeply? That is, what kinds of topics would you be most interested in writing about for *Hilltopics*? Why is this issue important to you?
4. Do you have any journalism/writing/design experience (lack of experience in no way disqualifies any applicant from consideration)?